

November 5, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable José Serrano
Chairman
Commerce, Justice, Science, and
Related Agencies Subcommittee
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Ranking Member
Commerce, Justice, Science, and
Related Agencies Subcommittee
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Granger, Chairman Serrano, and Ranking Member Aderholt:

As we approach the November 21, 2019 deadline to enact appropriations for Fiscal Year 2020, we urge you to ensure that the United States Census Bureau receives robust funding to ensure a fair and accurate 2020 Census. Specifically, we request a full year allocation that at minimum matches the Senate Committee on Appropriations approved amount of \$7.284 billion for Periodic Censuses and Programs, including \$6.696 billion for the 2020 Census, and that ideally is closer to the House approved levels of \$8.175 billion and \$7.5 billion, respectively.

We appreciate the consideration that has been given to Census funding thus far and the care that has gone into both the House and Senate Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies appropriations bills under the leadership of the Chairs and Ranking Members of those subcommittees. As leadership and appropriators have moved forward with previous Continuing Resolutions, the Census has been taken into account through the \$2.5 billion cap adjustment for the 2020 Census in the budget agreement and the modified anomaly in the first Continuing Appropriations Resolution that lays the groundwork for the Census Bureau to spend at a faster pace than is normally allowed. It is imperative

that we continue to provide robust funding to the Census Bureau because every Member of Congress and the constituents we represent benefits from a fair, accurate, and successful enumeration.

As Members of the Congressional Tri-Caucus and the Congressional Census Caucus, we believe that the amount included in the Senate-passed CJS appropriations bill should be the minimum amount appropriated to the Census Bureau overall, and the 2020 Census in particular, for FY 2020. Furthermore, the funding should be allocated in addition to the \$1.02 billion that will be carried over from FY 2019 to FY 2020. We ask that this funding is allocated at the soonest possible juncture, whether in a final CJS bill or in the next Continuing Resolution if it precedes that bill. We are concerned that if funding is not allocated soon, the Census Bureau will not be able to adequately finalize 2020 Census operations and may not feel comfortable using their current carry-over funding to conduct necessary preparations due to concerns of possible funding shortfalls in 2020.

If we move forward with an additional Continuing Resolution to avert a shutdown past the November 21, 2019 deadline, we urge you to include a full-year direct appropriation for the 2020 Census to ensure the Census Bureau can fully implement final preparations and risk management assessments for the 2020 Census. Although a large share of the Census Bureau's Fiscal Year 2020 funding will be spent after January 1, 2020 (Q2 and beyond), the Census Bureau must know how much money it will have for the entire fiscal year now in order to determine what efforts it can afford to undertake.

The following are examples of activities requiring significant expenditures and flexibility that the Census Bureau must carry out, or make final preparations for, in the first three months of the fiscal year. These activities can only be carried out thoroughly if the Census Bureau knows its full fiscal year funding allocation:

- Final address list verification and updating, including for new construction;
- Strengthening cyber-security and ensuring adequate load capacity for IT systems;
- Recruitment, screening, hiring, and training for census field staff;
- Completing ad buys and launching comprehensive national and targeted advertising;
- Location verification and advance contact for group living facilities and transitory locations; and
- Final preparations and launch of peak counting operations in Remote Alaska in January 2020.

In addition, funding is needed for the Census Bureau to complete mandates set by Congress over the past several years. These include increasing the number of Partnership Program staff, expanding targeted communications to Hard to Count (HTC) communities, and establishing a Questionnaire Assistance Center (QAC) program, which will cost at least \$90 million.

Finally, there are risks and threats particular to the 2020 Census that must be addressed. These include lasting damage to trust in the Census Bureau following the citizenship question controversy, major natural disasters, hiring difficulties due to low unemployment, cancellation of two out of three 2018 End-to-End Census Test sites (including the only remaining rural test site), and increasing concern, even among Department of Homeland Security officials and cybersecurity experts, of foreign and domestic cyber-attacks and disinformation campaigns. Therefore, it is critical that the Census Bureau receives robust, timely funding to combat these additional risks and threats that may undermine a fair and accurate count.

Thank you for your consideration. We are hopeful you will approve this appropriations request. The results of the 2020 Census have too great and far reaching of an impact to risk a miscount.

Sincerely,
